Hand-made Paper.—A hand-made paper factory has been working for some time. Since difficulties were experienced in calendering, the Paper Expert was deputed to Bezwada and Mysore for further study and he has now returned and a scheme for the manufacture of half a ton of paper per day has been submitted. The difficulties in calendering will be met by the purchase of a calendering machine and certain other minor implements.

Industrial Museum.—Arrangements have been made to start an Industrial Museum at Trichur. The manufacture of show cases and the collection of certain items of local exhibits have been already finished. Some of the outside Governments have also been addressed for details of their important products.

FISHERIES

On experiments conducted, it has been proved that several species of shark, yielding large quantities of oil of medicinal value, are available in our sea and backwaters. Government have made arrangements for extracting fish-oil and for marketing it.

Attempts are made to increase the catching of fish. Provision has been made in the budget for 1120 to bring 10 fishermen from British Malabar, who are experts in using bigger nets for deep sea fishing, in order to conduct the operations in our waters experimentally and to give training to our fishermen in this direction. A new fish-curing yard is also proposed to be opened in the year 1120 at Kannamali in Kumbalanghi Village.

CO-OPERATION

The Committee appointed to enquire into the working of the Co-operative movement in the State has submitted its report and the same is under consideration of Government. Some of the co-operative societies have played a prominent part in the distribution of seeds, clothes and other necessaries. A few have also run fair price shops successfully.

PANCHAYATS

In my budget speech of year before last, I have made a special reference to an important reform introduced in the Panchayat administration by granting more financial powers to the Panchayats in that it is entirely left to them to prepare their own budgets. I was watching with anxiety the results of this experiment. It is a matter of supreme pleasure for me to inform the House now, that from my experience of the last two years it has been abundantly clear that the reform has been worked out successfully by the Panchayats.

With a view to grant more and more powers to Panchayats, a bill has been introduced in this House, and it is hoped that ere long, with the co-operation of this House, it will come into law.

RURAL LIBRARIES

20 additional rural libraries have been started during the year and provision for 20 more has been made for the coming year, which will raise the number of libraries to 203.

VILLAGE COURTS

The Village Courts Act is now one year old. In addition to the 35 courts which existed last year, 12 more courts have been sanctioned this year, and the opening of all the new courts will be completed before the close of the year. With the opening of these courts, all the villages in the State will be brought under one village court or another. One of the main purposes intended to be achieved by the constitution of village courts was to avoid delay in the disposal of suits. Out of the total number of 2285 suits, including 607 pending in 1118, as many as 1816 have been already disposed of till 31st Medam 1119, leaving a pendency of only 469 suits. It may be stated that the number of suits pending on 31st Medam 1118, soon after the constitution of village courts, was 1947. This will enable the House to have an idea of the progress made and the promptness achieved in the disposal of suits in the village courts. There is also considerable decrease in the number of revision petitions. A conference of village court judges was held in the current year in which representatives from many village courts participated. The conference was useful and successful. Provision has been made for a similar conference next year. An examination of the Agents of the village courts was also held.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Epidemics.—The outbreak of cholera which began towards the end of 1118 continued in the first quarter of 1119 also. Vigorous preventive measures were taken and the attack subsided without much spreading. 36,602 inoculations were conducted. Outbreak of plague also was reported in the outlying villages of Chittur Taluk. Prompt measures were adopted to prevent

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly